



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

August 5, 2011	CC: Chapter Presidents
<u>Scholarship Program information for 2011 and 2012 programs</u>	

Thanks to all chapters for your continued participation and support of the scholarship program. It was a banner year with awards totaling \$1,166,350 and 200 renewals provided. Details follow on wrapping up the 2011 program and preparing for the 2012 program, which is just around the corner.

Scholarship Disbursements: You may receive inquiries from 2011 scholarship recipients about their awards as the school year is about to start. Checks were mailed directly to schools on August 1st for deposit into the student's account. Recipients were sent an email notification letting them know checks were mailed.

Altair: If you have not yet entered the benefits for your 2011 scholars into Altair, please do so as soon as possible. The majority of applicants have been uploaded; they just need the award entered. Please refer to the June 7, 2011 email from Wenda Carlson (sent to scholarship contacts at each chapter) for detailed instructions, or contact Wenda to request that the email be resent (contact information below).

Gearing up to for 2012

Fees: For 2012 the flat fee to receive all applications is \$700. If you offer renewals, the cost is \$75 per renewal.

Timeline: The online application will be available on our website on October 1st at www.nationalMSSociety.org/scholarship. The deadline to submit applications is January 13, 2012. We encourage students to apply early. It takes time to complete the application, obtain recommendations and mail in the requested backup documentation. The online system closes on January 13th at 11:59 p.m., central time, however, ACT customer support will not be available after 5:00 p.m., and late applications will not be accepted.

Publicizing the Program

- Brochures (item code BR3005) are available at no cost from chapterorders@nmss.org. Please only order what you think you will need for local distribution, as there is no plan to print more this year. Brochures can be sent to:
 - Students and/or high schools — to communicate the basics of how to apply, when to apply, and who is eligible.
 - Potential funders — to show faces and some hint of the impact it has and give them info on how to learn more about supporting scholarship in their area.
 - General audience — to show this great direct assistance program as just one of the many compelling programs we offer. Not just for people with MS, but for their families too.
- Publicize the program in your MS Connection (MSC). Suggested content is below. There is also suggested content in the MSC core pages on SAMS that appeals to potential funders. You may use both if you wish.

MSC Suggested Content

Highly qualified high-school seniors who have been diagnosed with MS or who have a parent with MS are eligible for the National MS Society's scholarship program. Additional criteria include financial need, academic record, participation in school or community activities, and an essay (written by the applicant) on the impact of MS on his or her life. Awards range from \$1,000–\$3,000 and a small number of four-year awards are offered. Applications for 2012 scholarships will be accepted (online only) between October 1, 2011, and January 13, 2012. For more info, visit nationalMSSociety.org/scholarship or call us at 1-800-344-4867 (1-800 FIGHT MS).

For more information, please contact Wenda Carlson, Publications & Programs Specialist at 303-698-6100 x15152 or wenda.carlson@nmss.org.



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

August 5, 2011	CC:
<u>Upcoming Teleconference: <i>Practical Guidance for Medical Professionals: How to Write an Effective Support Letter for a Reasonable Accommodation</i></u>	
Action Requested/Deadline: September 15, 2011	

The Society, led by the New York City-Southern New York chapter will be hosting a **free** professional education teleconference for health care professionals. *Practical Guidance for Medical Professionals: How to Write an Effective Support Letter for a Reasonable Accommodation* is designed for medical professionals who frequently write letters for patients requesting reasonable accommodations from their employers. Linda Batiste, an attorney from the Job Accommodation Network, will discuss the process involved and the best language to use when making these requests.

The teleconference is scheduled for Thursday, September 22, 2011 from 12:30-1:30 pm ET (11:30 am-12:30 pm CT, 10:30-11:30 am MT, 9:30-10:30 am PT). This program is offered at no charge, and is open to chapter staff and health care professionals. Pre-registration is required. To register visit <http://www.nationalmssociety.org/chapters/nyn/programsandservices/educational-opportunities-for-professionals/index.aspx> or call 212 463-7787, option 1. The registration deadline is September 15, 2011.

Information on this program will be posted on relevant pages throughout the national website. This program is an excellent way to engage your local medical health care professionals. To assist in your promotional efforts sample email content is available on SharePoint at Programs and Services>Employment and Insurance Resources>Employment Programs>Professional Education Teleconference Sample Email Content. You may also want to create a link from your local home page to the national site.

For more information please contact Barbara McKeon (212-453-3218 or Barbara.mckeon@nmss.org) or Kim Koch (303-698-6100, ext. 15158 or Kimberly.koch@nmss.org.)



National Multiple Sclerosis Society
733 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017-3288
Tel +1 212.986.3240
Fax +1 212.986.7981
E-mail nat@nmss.org
Nationalmssociety.org

RESEARCH/CLINICAL UPDATE

cc: Chapter President, Programs, Development

August 5, 2011

Study of Laquinimod Does Not Meet Primary Endpoint: Initial Results Announced in Press Release

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. and Active Biotech announced in a press release that the phase III BRAVO study, in which the experimental oral drug laquinimod was tested against inactive placebo in a study involving over 1300 people with relapsing-remitting MS (<http://www.nationalmssociety.org/about-multiple-sclerosis/relapsing-ms/relapsing-remitting-ms-rrms/index.aspx>), did not reach its primary goal of reducing the average number of relapses in a year. However, when the investigators adjusted the data to correct for differences in magnetic resonance imaging characteristics at the start of the study, a significant reduction in average annual relapse rate was observed in the group receiving the laquinimod. Further analysis is ongoing, and the results are being submitted for presentation at a scientific meeting later this year. The companies state that they plan to submit applications to regulatory authorities for the treatment of MS in the United States and European Union.

Background: Multiple sclerosis occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks nerve fiber-insulating myelin and other brain and spinal cord tissues. Laquinimod is a monoclonal antibody believed to affect the immune attack. In an earlier phase II study involving 306 people with relapsing-remitting MS, oral laquinimod reduced disease activity by 40.4% compared with inactive placebo. (*Lancet* 2008; 371: 2085–92) In one phase III study – the ALLEGRO study – laquinimod reduced the annual relapse rate in those completing the trial by 23%, compared to those on placebo. (Late-Breaking News – American Academy of Neurology, 2011)

The Study: In the BRAVO study, participants were randomly assigned to receive either laquinimod 0.6 mg (one capsule daily), inactive placebo, or Avonex[®] (interferon beta-1a, Biogen Idec) 30 mcg/wk for 24 months. The primary goal of the study was to determine the effect of laquinimod on the rate of relapses. Secondary goals included impacts on disease

activity as observed on MRI scans, and accumulation of disability. Laquinimod was not directly compared to Avonex, but just to the inactive placebo.

Laquinimod did not reduce the annualized relapse rate significantly more than placebo. According to the press release, there were differences in MRI characteristics between the treatment groups at the beginning of the study, and when the data were adjusted to account for these differences, laquinimod was found to reduce annualized relapse rate, disability progression (as measured by the EDSS scale of disease activity), and brain tissue volume loss significantly more than placebo. No details were released related to safety, except to state that “laquinimod demonstrated a favorable safety and tolerability profile compared to placebo.”

According to the companies, further analysis is ongoing, and the results are being submitted for presentation at a scientific meeting later in the year. The companies plan to submit applications to regulatory authorities for the treatment of MS in the United States and European Union. The complete data from the BRAVO and ALLEGRO studies should help define the safety and promise of laquinimod as a potential new oral therapy for relapsing-remitting MS.

Avonex is a registered trademark of Biogen Idec